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Security Upgrades Completed at Three Russian Nuclear Facilities

NNSA continues work to keep nuclear material out of the hands of terrorists

RUSSIA -- The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) commemorated ten years of work securing nuclear and radiological material in Russia and the former Soviet Union by completing security upgrades at two Russian nuclear facilities this week. Upgrades at a third facility were completed in September.

"The completion of these upgrades is an important milestone in cooperative efforts to prevent terrorists from gaining access to Russia's nuclear facilities. NNSA has completed work at nearly 70 percent of sensitive Russian sites," NNSA Administrator Linton F. Brooks said. "We will continue our important work partnering with the Russians to keep nuclear weapons material out of the hands of terrorists."

"Ongoing efforts by NNSA to secure nuclear material, nuclear weapons, and nuclear facilities in Russia form a central element of the Bush administration's priority on nonproliferation efforts worldwide. Few government programs are more directly connected to denying terrorists the materials they need for assembling nuclear weapons," Brooks continued.

NNSA has accelerated its security work at the most vulnerable sites first, which tended to be the smaller sites. The larger sites that remain to be secured in Russia are fewer in number but contain significant amounts of nuclear material. These remaining sites can be secured with roughly the same amount of time and effort as previously completed sites containing much less material. As a result, NNSA will secure much more material per year as the remaining sites are addressed and complete its work by 2008.

NNSA has already made dramatic progress in securing sites. Security improvements at nearly 70 percent of the Russian sites are complete. By the end of 2005, close to 80 percent will be complete. In 2003 and 2004, NNSA secured more vulnerable material than in any other two-year period since the program began.

The three sites where NNSA Material Protection Control and Accounting (MPC&A) security upgrades have recently taken place are the Novosibirsk Chemical Concentrates Plant, the Urals Electrochemical Integrated Plant, and the Electrochemical Plant at Zelenogorsk.

The following is a general description of each site and the security work conducted there:

Production Association Electrochemical Plant

The Production Association Electrochemical Plant (ECP), located in the closed city of Zelenogorsk, held its commissioning ceremony on December 8, 2004. The ECP is one of four Russian sites that downblend highly enriched uranium into low-enriched uranium under the U.S.-Russian Uranium Purchase Agreement. It also produces thirty percent of Russia's low-enriched uranium fuel for commercial power reactors.

A U.S. delegation, led by Paul Longsworth, deputy administrator for defense nuclear nonproliferation, donned protective clothing to tour interim storage vaults for highly enriched uranium and the downblending facility. Longsworth also presented awards to the U.S. and Russian project staff in recognition of their work on the project.

This work was accomplished primarily through contracts with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and with Russian equipment vendors and contractors. The MPC&A program will continue to provide low levels of support to the site to ensure long-term maintenance and operability of the upgraded systems until the year 2012.

Urals Electrochemical Enrichment Plant

The Urals Electrochemical Enrichment Plant (UEIP), located in the closed city of Novouralsk, held its commissioning ceremony on December 6, 2004. UEIP is a highly diversified enterprise that produces, among other commercial products, enriched uranium for commercial nuclear fuel.

A U.S. delegation viewed the physical protection upgrades MPC&A helped install, including hardened doors and windows, a material storage area, new protective and communications equipment, transportation security vehicles, computer-based material inventory systems, bar code equipment, electronic scales and modern analysis instrumentation for rapid, accurate inventorying. This work was accomplished primarily through contracts with Oak Ridge and Pacific Northwest National Laboratories and with Russian equipment vendors and contractors. The MPC&A program will continue to provide low levels of support to the site to ensure maintenance and operability of the upgraded systems until the year 2012.

Novosibirsk Chemical Concentrates Plant

The Novosibirsk Chemical Concentrates Plant (NCCP), located in the Siberian city of Novosibirsk, marked the completion of its MPC&A upgrades at a commissioning ceremony on September 30, 2004. NCCP is one of the country's largest enterprises and provides nuclear fuel for atomic power stations and research reactors in Europe, Asia, and the Far East. It was among the first Russian nuclear sites to receive material security upgrades under the MPC&A program.

A U.S. delegation toured the upgraded areas and observed firsthand an upgraded alarm and video monitoring system, secure storage construction, and new protective and communications equipment and transportation security vehicles. The delegation also saw elements of the substantial material accountancy systems provided under the MPC&A program.

This work was accomplished primarily through contracts with Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Sandia National Laboratory, and Russian equipment vendors and contractors. The MPC&A program will continue to provide low levels of support to the site to ensure maintenance and operability of the upgraded systems until the year 2013. Anatoly Kotelnikov, deputy director of the Russian Federal Atomic Energy Agency, NCCP site officials, and Russian project team members joined the U.S. delegation at the ribbon cutting ceremony.

Established by Congress in 2000, NNSA is a semi-autonomous agency within the U.S. Department of Energy responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear energy. NNSA maintains and enhances the safety, security, reliability and performance of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile without nuclear testing; works to reduce global danger from weapons of mass destruction; provides the U.S. Navy with safe and effective nuclear propulsion; and responds to nuclear and radiological emergencies in the U.S. and abroad.

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